GOVERNMENT OF INDIA
EXTERNAL AFFAIRS
LOK SABHA

UNSTARRED QUESTION NO:3460
ANSWERED ON:18.03.2015
SHORTAGE OF MANPOWER IN RPOS
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Will the Minister of EXTERNAL AFFAIRS be pleased to state:

(a) whether the Regional Passport Office (RPO) of Guwahati, serving eight States of the Northeast is facing acute shortage of manpower and if so, the details thereof;

(b) the average number of applications filed and passports delivered per day in RPO, Guwahati along with the total amount of fee collected during the last three years, year-wise;

(c) whether similar complaints have been received from RPOs of other states as well and if so, the details thereof, State-wise; and

(d) whether the Government has taken/proposed to take corrective measures to alleviate the difficulties in these RPOs and if so, the details thereof?

Answer

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF EXTERNAL AFFAIRS[GEN. (DR) V. K. SINGH (RETD)]

(a) The Regional Passport Office (RPO), Guwahati caters to passport needs of citizens of six states viz. Assam, Arunachal Pradesh, Manipur, Meghalaya, Mizoram and Nagaland. There is no shortage of manpower at present in RPO, Guwahati.

(b) The requisite information is tabulated below:

Year	Average number of passport applications filed per day#	Average number of passports issued /delivered per day#	Total fee collected (Rupees)
2012	247	214	7,40,40,700/-
2013	256	208	10,94,35,100/-
2014	256	257$	10,46,90,558/-

#Based on 244 working days per year.
$Passport issuance being a cyclical process, the excess output is due to clearance of arrears during the year.

(c) & (d)
(i) There is shortage of staff at different levels in some Passport Offices. The staff strength of the Central Passport Organisation (CPO) has not kept pace with steeply rising demand for passports across the country. Whereas the number of passport applications has gone up from 56 lakh in 2009 to 87 lakh in 2014 an increase of 55%, the sanctioned strength of CPO has increased from 2344 to 2697 an increase of 15% only in the corresponding period.

(ii) An indent has been placed with the Staff Selection Commission (SSC) for the recruitment of 91 Assistants and 554 Lower Division Clerks.

(iii) Steps have also been taken to fill up the existing vacancies at the Passport Offices through fast track promotion and deputation from other Ministries/Departments. Wherever necessary, recruitment norms have also been relaxed with the approval of Department of Personnel & Training and Union Public Service Commission for filling up the vacancies quickly.

(iv) As part of the restructuring of CPO cadre and bringing in qualitative change, Recruitment Rules have been amended to envisage direct recruitment of 25% of the vacancies at the level of Assistant through the Combined Graduate Level Examination conducted by Staff Selection Commission (SSC).

(v) As a stop gap measure, 429 Data Entry Operators (DEOs) have been engaged in lieu of Group "B"(Non-Gazetted) and Group "C" posts for deployment at the RPOs.

(vi) The additional staff requirement of the Passport Offices, arising due to seasonal increase in workload, is met by temporary duty of officials from other Passport Offices.

(vii) Staff shortage has also been offset to a large extent by the implementation of Passport Seva Project on PPP basis which includes setting up of 77 Passport Seva Kendras (PSKs) acting as extended arms of the 37 Passport Offices across the country. The Service Provider staff renders front-end services such as token issuance, initial scrutiny of passport service related application forms and supporting documents, acceptance of fee where applicable, scanning/ digitisation of documents and taking photographs and biometrics of applicants at the PSKs.

(viii) With a view to increase productivity of the CPO employees, a Productivity Linked Incentive Scheme (PLIS) has been implemented to financially incentivize individual performance measured against pre-set and mutually agreed upon parameters. The essence of PLIS is that differential performance would be differentially rewarded.

(ix) 'Passport Seva Puraskars', aimed at increasing output, are given away annually to outstanding employees to recognise their efforts and contribution to speedy service delivery.